

Southwestern Wisconsin School

Middle School Choir

MS Choir

Mrs. Theresa Brown

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Whether you realize it or not, you are now a part of something that will have an effect on you for the rest of your life. Music is a part of who we all are as human beings, and you will study this phenomenon in choir class.

As we journey forward, please keep these things in mind: we are a team, we are a musical group, and we are a family.

4 Simple Rules for Any Choir Student

1. We are to respect each other and our learning environment.
 - Take care of all materials and of each other
2. We are to be role models of responsible and prepared behavior.
 - Take care of your own business and practice!
3. We are to strive for consistent improvement in our work and ourselves.
 - Try to get better with every class and lesson
 - Treat others the way you want to be treated.
4. The instructor is the last word in proper behavior.
 - What Mrs. Brown says, goes, but if you need to talk, let's do that outside of class time.

Procedures - What we do in class

Attitude - Check any bad attitude at the door when you come in. Our classroom is a positive learning environment.

Backpacks and Bags - Please refrain from bringing your bags (school or sport) into the music room. There is not enough room, as we have so many members, it becomes difficult to keep things clean, as it is. They are also a tripping hazard to everyone in the room. You may bring a book & homework, when specified.

Bathroom Passes - I make it a policy to only allow one student out of my room at a time for bathroom needs. The obvious exceptions are cases involving the student's physical safety (bleeding, vomiting, etc.). Students have recess and lunch before class, so you are expected to use that time to take care of personal needs. Exceptions will certainly be made for medical reasons

Clothing - Clothes need to be comfortable and easy to move in. This is an active class, and to participate fully, students need to be able to move. Clothing also needs to be school-appropriate. Please see the Student Handbook for more information.

Electronics - The school has adopted a policy of no tolerance during classroom and passing times. It is advised that all electronics are left in your locker until the appropriate times designated to use them. If that is something you just cannot do, realize that if I come to know you are using a device during class, I will follow the procedures of the school.

Equipment - Unless instructed to do so, students should not handle any equipment they see in the room. THIS INCLUDES THE PIANO AND OTHER "STUFF". Students are also not to use whiteboard or the markers unless told to do so. Chairs and risers are to be operated without abusing them.

Exit Interview- All Choir members must remain in the class until the end of the semester. Students who have decided to exit Choir must speak with Mrs. Brown and get a "drop class form" the week before the semester ends. Students will be given an exit interview to complete this process. Forms turned in after the due date, will not be accepted as this is irresponsible and against the policy. Semester end dates are: January 17th and June 2nd.

Food, Drinks, and Gum - No, No, and Absolutely Not! If we are to maintain a clean classroom environment, we need to keep food and drinks out of the equation. It's also not very easy to sing with food or gum in your mouth. Eat your lunch at lunchtime. Exceptions would be special occasions or medical conditions. Water in clear water bottles, with a lid, is also highly encouraged.

Preparedness - Students should arrive in the classroom with all of the appropriate materials before the start of class. Students will be warned if special materials are needed ahead of time (check the board). Lacking materials will result in a loss of participation points.

Speech - We use language that is appropriate of professionals in the classroom. Cursing, insults, and hate speech will not be tolerated in the classroom. One warning will be given, depending on the infraction. After the first warning, participation points will be lost. Once those are gone, further measures will be taken.

Violations of Rules & Procedures

Being in this class is a privilege, and I will be treating it as such. Students who choose not to follow the Rules and Procedures will be dealt with in the following manner:

- Verbal warning or name on the board
- Pick up chairs after class
- Noon detention
- After school Detention

Specific Expectations for Choir Class:

- Enter classroom quietly and carefully. We have many students who need to get their folders and chairs. Be aware of all that is happening around you so that everyone is safe.
- Have all materials and be in "Rehearsal Mode" before the start of class.
- Listen attentively
- Learn music
 - There are Singing Tests every quarter. You will be graded on memory, pitch and expression.
 - Your daily grades will be based on participation, attitude and behavior.

Materials - Students are **required** to have the following:

- A pencil
- A folder for music and materials

Students are **recommended** to have the following:

- A clear water bottle with a lid for water (you must have it filled before class starts)
- A highlighter (color of your choice)

- **Grading** - Grading is weighted on the following scale for the **Middle School** courses:
 - Daily Participation and Homework = 20%
 - Assessments and Performances = 80%

Daily Participation - Unlike many of your other classes, the grade you receive in this class will largely be based on your participation in class activities. If you are absent, you can obviously not participate in that day's class, and will therefore, to earn points for that day's class.

Participation points lost due to absences can be made up by volunteering for events that choir is a functional part of, or attending a musical event (classical concerts, musicals, etc.) outside of your own school performances. Check the *Middle School Choir Events* to look for these events which have an asterisk.

Participation points can also be lost for violations of the Rules and Procedures. In these cases, the student will first receive a warning, and then begin losing points for themselves.

Daily Journal and Written Warm Ups - Choir members will have sheets provided to be completed every class at the beginning of the hour. Students must have these items in their folders at all times, along with the syllabus, music (in alphabetical order), a pencil and folder rubric.

Folder Check - folders will be checked for day warm ups, alphabetized music, syllabus, pencil and folder rubric. All items **MUST HAVE THE FOLDER NUMBER** on them. Corrected and graded assignments will be kept on file.

Lessons- Most students will have one 15 minute lesson per week. At this time, we will test voices, practice sight reading, practice vocal warm ups and tone quality, learn and rehearse the songs for the concerts. If you miss a lesson, it must be made up within one week.

Performances - One of the main goals is to share what we learn in class with the community around us. Performances are mandatory for all students. Excluding a death in the family or other emergencies of an extreme nature, **there is no excuse for missing the concert**. Students who miss a concert will be allowed to make up some of the missed points by turning in a research project. This is only allowed when a parent/guardian contacts the instructor directly. You will see the calendar of events, at the end of this handbook, so please plan accordingly.

Sight reading - This is a skill that will follow you throughout your music career, whether in Band, Choir or private vocal or instrumental lessons. You may find it challenging, at first, but with practice, you will get it and be able to use it while learning your music. At the end of each quarter, I will be testing you to see how you are progressing. On one of the next pages is a rubric for grading. You can use it to track your progress.

Vocal Performance Rubric

	10	9	8	7	6-0
Attendance	Student arrives on time	Student arrives 5 minutes late	Student arrives 10 minutes late	Student arrive 15 minutes late	Student did not attend
Attitude	Student has a positive attitude, sets a good example and encourages and others	Student has a positive attitude; sets a good example; does not encourage others	Student has a positive attitude, does not set a good example or encourage others	Student	Student does NOT have a good attitude
Concert Behavior	Student lined up & walked to the correct place without talking; behaved on the risers.	Student lined up, walked without talking to the correct place.	Student lined up and went to the correct place,	Student lined up	Student did not have good concert behavior
Audience Behavior	Student always had good audience behavior	Student almost always had good audience behavior	Student sometimes had good audience behavior	Student rarely had good audience behavior	Student did not have good audience behavior
After Concert	Student stayed until the end and cleaned up after themselves and others	Student stayed until the end; put their own things away	Student stayed until the end	Student did not stay until the end	Student did not attend

Sightreading Rubric - Individual

Teacher Name: **Mrs. Brown**

Category	4	3	2	1
Hand Signals	Virtually no errors in hand signs; 90% correct	An occasional error but mostly correct; 80% correct	Some hand signals are correct; but there are repeated errors; 70 % correct	Inaccurate hand signals; 60% correct
Pitch	Virtually no errors. Pitch is very accurate. 90% matched	An occasional isolated error, but most of the time pitch is accurate and secure. 80% matched	Some accurate pitches, but there are frequent and/or repeated errors. 70% matched.	Very few accurate or secure pitches. 60% matched
Syllables	Virtually no errors. Syllables very accurate. 90% matched	An occasional isolated error, but most of the time syllables are accurate and secure. 80% matched	Some accurate syllables, but there are frequent and/or repeated errors. 70% matched.	Very few accurate or secure syllable. 60% matched
Note Recognition	Virtually no errors in recognizing notes and syllable they are: 90% accurate	Occasional error in recognition of note & syllables: 80% accurate	Some accuracy frequent errors of notes/syllables: 70% accurate	Very few syllables/notes correct: 60% accurate
Reading	Hand signals, pitch and syllables are 90% accurate	Hand signals, pitch, syllables 80% accurate	Hand signals, pitch, syllables 70% accurate	Hand signals, pitch, syllables 60% accurate

Middle School Choir Events

Middle School Christmas Concert	Sunday, December 8th @ 12:00
*High School Christmas Concert	Sunday, December 8th @ 2:00
*MS/HS Honors Practice (Mineral Point) 9-12	Thursday, January 23rd, 9 am
*Honors Choir (Mineral Point) All Day	Saturday, January 25th; Concert at 4:30
Middle School Pops Concert	Monday, February 24 th @ 7:30
*Music Menus	Sunday, February 23rd @ 5:00 HS Cafeteria
*High School Pops Concert	February 23rd @ 7:30 MS Gym
Middle School Solo and Ensemble (IG)	Saturday, March 14th No School day - may change to April HS Date
*Jazz/Show Choir Festival @ Fennimore	Tuesday, March 17th
*High School Musical	Fri - Sun, March 20, 21, 22
*High School Solo and Ensemble (Mineral Point)	Saturday, April 4th (Mrs. R absent)
Middle School Spring Concert	Monday, April 27th @ 7:30
Large Group Festival (CC)	Friday, April 30th 8am-3pm
*High School Spring Concert	Wednesday, May 13th @ 7:30
Eighth Grade Promotion	Wednesday, May 27th @ 7:30

Please put these dates on your calendar - also check out the school website under Middle School Music

*optional dates

Please tear this sheet off and return to Mrs. Brown by Friday, October 4th

Turning in this paper by the deadline will be one of your grades in Choir!

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

We have read through and discussed the Middle School Choir Handbook in class.

As a student, I understand what will be expected of me as a member of Choir and agree to follow the rules and standards as stated in this handbook.

As a parent, I understand what is expected of my child and will help him/her meet these expectations. We have discussed these policies together and will see to it that I/the student will fulfill all of his/her obligations to the Southwestern Middle School Choir.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date: _____